

# Flag Rules

## **Philosophy**

*The primary objective of our Flag program is to have fun. We want every child to have an enjoyable experience. To that end we will work very hard to make sure that the fundamentals are being taught, and that all participants have the opportunity to learn, have fun and a positive experience. It is an opportunity for each child to make new friends and to experience the pride of being part of a team. It is also an opportunity for players to begin to understand the game of football and allow our club to better prepare our players to play in our tackle program in the future.*

## **Skills and Fundamentals**

Every child will have the experience throughout the season to play every position regardless of physical size or ability. Each child will be coached on the basic fundamentals of football through a progression of each skill.

1. Proper stretching
2. Form running
3. Ball handling-handing off, receiving a handoff, pitching
4. Throwing
5. Catching
6. Stance
7. Centering ball- Short and shot gun
8. Pass Patterns
9. Blocking-run/pass
10. Rules of the game

## **Field Layout**

The football field will be divided up into 2 flag game fields. Both end zones will still be used. The 40-yard line will be the goal line for each field, making the end zone from the 40-50 yard lines. The first down markers will be at the 20-yard lines. The width of the field will be brought in with cones approximately 10 yds on each side. The final dimensions of the field will be 40 yds long and 30 yds wide.

## Rules

- Each child will be a captain for a game, and will take part in the coin toss which will determine who will have 1<sup>st</sup> possession. The winner of the coin toss may defer in order to start the second half with possession. The loser of the coin toss will decide which goal they want to defend.
- The game will consist of two 20-minute halves, running time. Teams will change sides after 20 minutes with possession going to the team that played defense the 1<sup>st</sup> possession of the game.
- Only 2 coaches per team will be allowed on the field at all times, and the other(s) will be on the sidelines making substitutions. Every player will participate in every game unless they missed all weekly practices of the game week.
- Each team will have 40 seconds from the time the ball is spotted until the ball is snapped. The players must hustle to make this work. Each team will receive one warning without being penalized.
- Teams will field 8 players on the field at one time. Offense will consist of a center, 2 guards, 2 ends, 2 running backs, and a quarterback. A minimum of 5 players must be on the line of scrimmage for the offensive team. The center and guards are ineligible pass receivers or running backs. Guards can have maximum 1 yd split from the center.
- Quarterbacks are not allowed to run the ball from the snap from the center. They must pitch, hand-off, or throw a pass. They can catch a pass, or receive a handoff that comes back to them in order to run.
- Blocking is legal with hands between the belt and the shoulders. No holding or hooking a defender, no holding clothes, no blocking in the back or using elbows to block.
- The defensive teams can line up as they wish with the exception of the pass rushers. Only 3 pass rushers are allowed and they must line up on the ball and cannot be more than 3yds outside of the offensive guards. The pass rushers can only cross the line of scrimmage after the referee completes a 4 count or there is running play. There will be no blitzing. Once the ball has been handed off, everyone is allowed to cross the line of scrimmage immediately.
- The team with first possession will start with the ball at its own 5-yd line. They will have 4 plays to get the ball past the 20 yd. line (midfield), which is always a first down. Once the ball passes the 20 yd. line, the team has 4 plays to score. If a team fails to get a 1st down or a score, the opposing team will take over possession of the ball where the ball was ruled dead, unless it is inside the 10 yd. line. Then it will be placed at their 10 yd. line.
- Teams will not be allowed to run the ball from a direct handoff when the line of scrimmage is within 5yds. of a 1st down or touchdown. This is “The No hand off zone”. The ball must be thrown or pitched to an end, a receiver or a running back in order to get a 1st down or touchdown. It does not have to be thrown over the line of scrimmage.
- The ball is always spotted where the ball carriers feet are when the flag is pulled.
- One back is allowed to be in motion horizontally to line of scrimmage before the ball has been snapped. If they advance forward, it will be a 5-yard penalty.

- There are no fumbles. Once the ball hits the ground the ball is dead. The team with last possession will get the ball at the spot of the fumble. No yards can ever be gained from a fumble. When a knee hits the ball is also ruled dead. Pitching or passing the ball forward once you are over the line of scrimmage is a penalty.
- An intercepted pass is live and the intercepting team may advance the ball until a flag has been pulled.
- When making a reception near the out of bounds, only one foot has to be in bounds in order for the catch to be good.
- Substituting will only be allowed after play has been ruled dead. During the season each player must have played a line position, an end position, and a running back position. QB's are considered a running back position. Players are not required to play QB. You must use 2 QB's throughout the game.
- Each Team is allowed two 1-minute time outs per half. The clock will stop. If not used in the first half, they are lost. Time outs cannot be carried over.
- A game that ends in a tie will remain a tie.
- Scoring will be 6 pts. for a touchdown,
  - 1 point for an extra point from the 3 yd line
  - 2 points from the 8 yd line
  - 2 points for a safety (Team will get possession at midfield after safety)

## **Penalties**

- Offsides/illegal motion on offense - 5 yds
- Offsides on defense - 5 yds and an automatic 1<sup>st</sup> down
- Holding or illegal block - 10 yds (from original LOS)
- Defensive Holding – 10 yds, replay down if necessary (best result)
- Illegal flag pull (before possession of ball) – 10 yds and an automatic 1<sup>st</sup> down
- Flag guarding or stiff arming – 10 yds and loss of down (from original LOS)
- Offensive pass interference – 10 yds and loss of down (from original LOS)
- Defensive pass interference - 10 yds /point of contact (best result) auto 1<sup>st</sup> down
- Delay of game - 10 yds
- Illegal pass or pitch beyond (LOS) - 5 yds and loss of down
- Illegal picks – 10 yds and loss of down
- Illegal pass rush – 10 yds, replay down if necessary (best result)
- Arguing a call or showing any signs of poor sportsmanship will result in possible benching for remainder of half or ejection from the game (official's discretion), penalty will be 10 yds from the LOS
- A half or a game cannot end on a defensive penalty
- If any penalty yardage is more than field remains, it will be ½ the distance
- No declining of penalties. Refs will give teams best options. 4<sup>th</sup> down penalties against the defense are automatic 1<sup>st</sup> downs for the offense